

REMARKS

The application has been thoroughly reviewed in light of the September 11, 2006 Final Office Action. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8, 10, 12, 17, 20-24, 26-28, and 30 are pending. Claims 1, 17, and 30 are independent. Claims 3, 5, 9, 11, 13, 18, 19, 25, and 31-34 were previously canceled without prejudice and/or disclaimer of subject matter. In an effort to expedite prosecution of this application to allowance, the Applicant has now also cancelled claims 14-16, 29 and 35 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. The Applicant gratefully acknowledges Examiner's allowance of claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8, 17, 20-24, and 26-30.

In the Final Office Action's Summary sheet, the Examiner states that claim 29 is allowed, but in the body of the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejects this claim as being unpatentable. As stated above, the Applicant cancelled claim 29 without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, there is no longer an issue with regard to this claim. Further, each of the issues raised in the outstanding Final Office Action are addressed below.

Prior Art Rejections

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 14-16, 29 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,870,723 (Pare, Jr. et al.). The Applicants have cancelled claims 14-16, 29, and 35 without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, this rejection is now moot, the Examiner is requested to reconsider and withdraw her rejections of claims 14-16, 29, and 35.

The Applicant hereby incorporates all of the arguments submitted in response to the March 14, 2006 Office Action as well as all of the arguments made during the June 12, 2006 Interview with the Examiner.

Appl. No.: 09/495,898
Response Dated: November 6, 2006
Reply to the Final Office Action of September 11, 2006

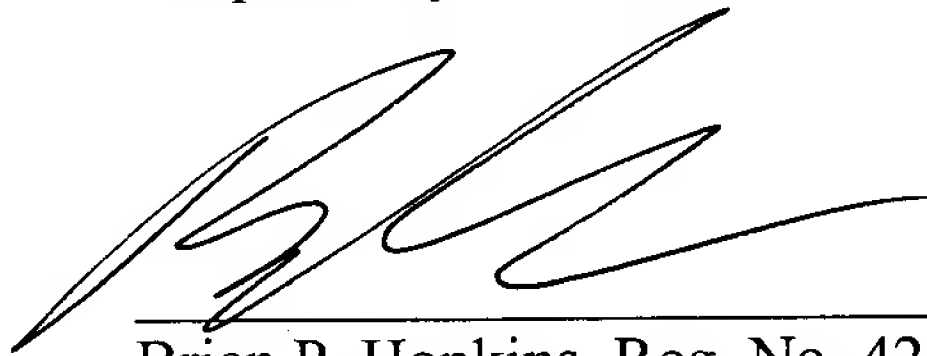
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all issues raised in the September 11, 2006 Final Office Action have been addressed and request favorable reconsideration of the subject application. Applicant also respectfully requests that all of the prior art rejections issued in the outstanding Final Office Action be withdrawn and that the subject application be allowed. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

No fees are believed due with this response. In the event that it is determined that additional fees are due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the undersigned's Deposit Account No. **50-0311**, Ref. No. 28589-015 (formerly 21958-015), Customer No. **35437**.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 935-3000. All correspondence should be directed to our New York office address, which is given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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